

## Bridge International Academies joins *Partnership Schools for Liberia* to radically improve primary and nursery education in Liberia



- 42% of primary aged children in Liberia are currently out of school; higher for children in the poorest quintile
- Only 20% of children enrolled in primary school complete secondary school; 50% of children in school join 3 to 6 years late
- 55% of 15-25 year olds are illiterate; 66% for girls



- From September 2016, Bridge will provide a free public education in 50 primary and nursery schools in Liberia, educating ~20,000 Liberian children
- Bridge will employ Liberian teachers, managers and operations staff
- All Bridge schools will follow the Liberian national curriculum
- This pilot project will be closely monitored and reviewed



- Bridge educates over 100,000 children; vision is 10,000,000 pupils across 12+ countries by 2025
- Bridge has a gender parity index of 97 and supports women's groups in its communities
- Bridge pupils demonstrate significant learning gains; Bridge's first graduating class to sit nation-wide primary exit exams were 40% more likely to pass the exam than their peers



- Bridge operates over 450 primary and nursery schools in Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria
- Bridge is expanding to India in 2016
- Bridge employs over 6,000 people in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, India, the US and the UK
- In Liberia, Bridge will create at least 60 additional jobs for Liberians to support the initiative

### About the partnership

The Liberian education system is in crisis. Decades of civil war and the recent Ebola epidemic have left 42% of children are out of school, only 20% of children enrolled in primary school complete secondary school and 50% of children are joining school 3 to 6 years late. A Liberian girl has a higher chance of being married before the age of 18 than being able to read!

Recognizing that a country is only as strong as its youth is educated, the Government of Liberia has put in place radical changes: it has provided over \$2 million in grants to its schools, renovated over 125 facilities, and distributed over a million textbooks and 20,000 teachers' guides. Determined to reach UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 of ensuring inclusive and quality education for all, the government has now launched *Partnership Schools for Liberia*. The government will work with education providers with proven models of school management, teacher support, and increasing learning outcomes to transform free public primary and nursery schools. Bridge International Academies is the first partner to participate in the initiative, alongside other Liberian organizations. The partnership is entirely funded by international donors, and will not use any funds reserved for existing educational programs.

Under the partnership, children will attend robustly managed public schools, where thoroughly prepared and trained teachers will be in class teaching the Liberian national curriculum for over 8 hours a day. Children will benefit from custom designed practical learning materials, including textbooks, independent study books, individual homework books, and learning aids. Children will have access to extra-curricular activities such as sport, music and debate and will be supported to be leaders in their communities.

In line with the Government's obligation to provide a free basic education to all its citizens, all schools in the partnership will be free of charge to Liberian families. The schools will remain under government control and will meet the Ministry of Education's standards and expectations for primary and nursery schools. Implementation will be closely monitored and progress consistently tracked and measured.

Government school teachers will be provided with additional training and support, including daily teachers' guides empowering them to create child-centered learning environments, where all children are learning. The partnership will additionally train new teachers and create employment opportunities for Liberia's best and brightest to lead this critical government initiative.

Bridge is honored to serve the people of Liberia under this initiative. In a pilot program, Bridge will implement its tried and tested model in 50 public primary schools, accessing approximately 20,000 children for the 2016 – 2017 academic year. In its 8 years working in Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria, Bridge has been a proactive and successful partner to parents and governments, delivering statistically significant learning gains for its pupils. In Kenya, Bridge's pioneer pupils had a 40% higher chance of passing national primary exit exams in 2015. We aim to achieve similar results in Liberia.

The Government of Liberia is investing in the tremendous human capacity for learning. The partnership will create schools where all children run to school everyday filled with hope and excitement, and return home each day filled with new knowledge and new experiences. It will create opportunities for all children to dream big, for themselves, and for Liberia, and see a path to achieve those dreams.

